

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 2622

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR EG US EC
SUBJ: FAHMY'S COMMENT RE US PRESSURE ON EC AND
US ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

REF: STATE 31248

SUMMARY: GAVE FAHMY OUR RESPONSE TO HIS CHARGE OF USG
"PRESSURE" ON EC RE A NEW STATEMENT. HE LISTENED,
BUT INSISTED USG PRESSURE HAD BEEN APPLIED THROUGH VP
MONDALE. USG, INSISTED, MUST CHOOSE: EITHER IT IS
ONLY COUNTRY CAPABLE OF MOVING TOWARD AN ARAB/ISRAELI
SETTLEMENT OR THAT IT CANNOT DO SO. GOE WOULD LIKE TO
CONTINUE TO WORK WITH USG, BUT IF WE CANNOT PRODUCE
AND MUST WORK ON "ISREALI INSTRUCTION", IT MUST
LOOK TO OTHERS. I TOLD HIM THAT, AS HE WELL KNEW, WE ARE
THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT CAN HELP, BUT THAT USG CANNOT
IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT. IF ANY SETTLEMENT IS TO BE
JUST AND DURABLE, PARTIES THEMSELVES MUST ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE. I
REJECTED SUGGESTION USG WORKING ON "ISRAELI INSTRUCTIONS", BUT HE
MUST RECOGNIZE THAT USG CAN ONLY HELP IF WE UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF
BOTH PARTIES.

FAHMY EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT FREQUENT DINITZ CALLS ON SECRETARY
AND UNDERSECRETARY IN PAST TWO WEEKS, OUR CONTINUING INABILITY
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RESOLVE AMOCO DRILLING PROBLEM AND ABOUT SOME ANSWERS GIVEN BY FORMER
SECRETARY KISSINGER ON JANUARY 19 TO NY TIMES INTERVIEWER. LATTER,
IN FAHMY'S VIEW, ACCEPTED ISRAELI POSITION THAT ADDITIONAL TERRITORY
NEEDED FOR PHYSICAL SECURITY. EGYPTIANS INSIST INTERNATIONAL
BOUNDARY IS EGYPTIAN BORDER AND MUST REMAIN SO AND FORMER PRE-
SIDENT NIXON HAD AGREED. NO EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT CAN CEDE EGYPTIAN
TERRITORY TO ISRAELIS.

I STRESSED ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL PURPOSES OF SECRETARY VANCE'S UPCOMING VISIT IS TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF ALL PARTIES IN ORDER TO MAKE JUDGEMENT HOW WE CAN BEST PROCEED AND REMIND HIM OF PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE STATEMENTS ACCORDING ME PROBLEM HIGHEST PRIORITY. BUT, EGYPTIANS MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT ISRAEL HAS POINT OF VIEW THAT USG MUST WEIGH IF IT IS TO HELP.

FAHMY NEXT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT ISRAELIS SEEM TO BELIEVE SINAI II "FREEZES" SITUATION IN 1977 AND THAT THERE IS NO URGENCY TO MOVING AHEAD. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE TO EGYPT. EVEN IF FINAL SETTLEMENT CANNOT BE REACHED UNTIL 1978, ME PEACE PROCESS MUST RESUME IN 1977 AND GOE MUST HAVE CLEAR CONCEPT WHERE USG BELIEVES IT SHOULD END. ME SITUATION TOO VOLATILE TO TOLERATE DELAY. PRESENT MOMENT IS UNIQUE TO RESUME SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS BASED ON SADAT'S PUBLICLY AVOWED READINESS TO ACCEPT ISRAEL "LEGALLY" IN AREA. ISRAEL SHOULD NOT TAKE FOR GRANTED AND PICKED SADAT'S STATEMENTS OF WILLINGNESS TO END STATE OF BELLIGERENCY. IT IS A DECLARATION OF INTENT, WHICH MANY ARABS STILL OPPOSE AND WILL BE FEASIBLE ONLY IF AN ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IS REACHED WHICH INCLUDES ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY AND CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN ENTITY. FAHMY LOOKS FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THESE MATTERS WITH THE SECRETARY NEXT WEEK. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH GENSCHER, WALDHEIM AND SYTENKO GONE, I WAS ABLE TO SEE FAHMY THIS MORNING. MEETING LASTED HOUR AND A HALF. HE AT ONCE RAISED WHAT HE CALLED OUR "PRESSURE" ON THE EC NOT TO MAKE A NEW STATEMENT. I RESPONDED ALONG LINES PARAS 1 AND 2 REFTTEL, STRESSING THAT WE DID NOT "PRESSURE" THE EC, ALTHOUGH WE MADE CLEAR OUR WELL CONFIDENTIAL

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KNOWN POSITION ON STATEMENTS OF THE KIND PROPOSED. IN MAKING THE POINTS, I ALSO EMPHASIZED OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERN RELATED TO THE TIMING OF THE STATEMENT. AT A TIME WHEN VARIOUS FRIENDS, INCLUDING USG, ARE BEGINNING TO EXPLORE THE POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES IN ORDER TO FIND WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD TOWARDS NEGOTIATIONS, A NEW STATEMENT PRE-JUDGING THE ISSUES AND OFFERING PRESCRIPTIONS IS HARDLY HELPFUL.

2. FAHMY LISTENED POLITELY, BUT INSISTED WE HAD APPLIED PRESSURE ON THE EC. VP MONDALE HAD RAISED THE MATTER WITH BOTH THE GERMANS AND THE FRENCH, CAUSING GENSCHER TO MAKE A QUICK TRIP TO LONDON TO EXPRESS HIS OPPOSITION TO ANY NEW STATEMENT. CONTINUING, FAHMY SAID HE "DISAGREED COMPLETELY WITH OUR PROCEDURE." USG MUST CHOOSE: EITHER IT IS THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT CAN "DO BUSINESS" ON THE ARAB/ISRAELI QUESTION, IN WHICH CASE GOE WILL WORK WITH US ON THIS BASIS OR, IF WE CANNOT DO SO, GOE AND ARABS MUST ALSO WORK WITH OTHERS. IF WE DO BELIEVE WE ARE THE ONLY COUNTRY WITH THE CAPACITY TO ACT, WE SHOULD DO SO WITH ALL DESPATCH. SPECIFICALLY, THE RETURN OF OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AND A PALESTINE ENTITY SHOULD BE WORKED OUT AS WELL AS A FINAL PEACE AGREEMENT TO END BELLIGERENCY. AS IT HAS SHOWN IN

THE PAST, GOE WOULD LIKE TO WORK WITH USG ON THIS BASIS. BUT IF USG CANNOT DELIVER, AND IS WORKING ON "ISRAELI INSTRUCTIONS", GOE MUST LOOK TO OTHERS.

3. I SAID I THOUGH HE WAS FULLY AWARE THAT USG IS THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT HAS RELATIONS WITH BOTH SIDES AND CAN HELP THE PARTIES ACHIEVE A SETTLEMENT. AS HE ALSO KNEW, IT CANNOT BE A MATTER OF USG IMPOSITION; IF A JUST AND DURABLE SETTLEMENT IS TO BE REACHED, THE PARTIES THEMSELVES MUST ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE TO ACHIEVE IT. I COULD NOT ACCEPT THE SUGGESTION THAT USG IS WORKING ON "ISRAELI INSTRUCTIONS." THIS, AS HE WELL KNEW, WAS TOTALLY WRONG. AS A FRIEND OF BOTH PARTIES, USG HAS SOUGHT TO UNDERSTAND THE POSITIONS OF BOTH. ONLY IN THIS WAY CAN WE PROVIDE THE TYPE OF OBJECTIVE HELP THAT THIS COMPLEX PROBLEM REQUIRES.

4. FAHMY NOTED ISRAELI AMBASSADOR DINITZ HAS BEEN IN TO SEE THE SECRETARY OR UNDERSECRETARY HABIB SEVERAL TIMES IN PAST TWO WEEKS.
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USG, HEFEARED, SEEMS TO BE BOUND BY ISRAELI VIEWS. AS AN EXAMPLE, HE CITED THE AMOCO DRILLING ISSUE IN THE GULF OF SUEZ. USG LEGAL POSITION IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF GOE AND IN ADDITION USG COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED. YET USG HAS DONE NOTHING MEANINGFUL ABOUT THE PROBLEM. IN THE MEANTIME, HE HAD JUST BEEN INFORMED THAT A SECOND ISRAELI RIG IS DRILLING IN THE AL-TOR AREA. I TOLD FAHMY THAT, AS HE KNEW FULL WELL, WE HAVE SOUGHT TO FIND A PRAGMATIC SOLUTION TO THE OIL DRILLING PROBLEM. WE HAD MADE VARIOUS SUGGESTIONS TO HIM, BUT THSES HAD NOT BEEN ACCEPTED. FAHMY ARGUED THAT OUR FOUR-POINT PROPOSAL, EVEN WITH A REVISED POINT 2, STILL ACCEPTS THE ISRAELI CONTENTION THAT ITS PERMISSION MUST BE SOUGHT FOR ANY DRILLING IN EGYPT CONCESSION AREAS IN THE EASTERN GULF OF SUEZ. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE TO EGYPT.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1676

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 2622

EXDIS

5. AS IS HIS WONT, FAHMY HAD BY THIS TIME WORKED HIMSELF UP EMOTIONALLY AND MADE SOME RATHER SCATTER SHOT OBSERVATIONS. ALLUDING TO THE CONCUSSION BOMBS THAT WERE PROMISED ISRAEL, HE SCOFFED THAT THIS HARDLY SUGGEST USG WANTS A ME PEACE. PROVIDING ISRAEL WITH SUCH WEAPONS WILL HINDER RATHER THAN HELP THE PEACE PROCESS.

6. FAHMY THEN SHOWED ME A LONG INTERVIEW THAT FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD GIVEN TO NY TIMES ON JAN 19, AND EXPRESSED HIS OUTRAGE ABOUT SOME OF THE ANSWERS. KISSINGER HAD FOCUSED SOLELY UPON ISRAELI SECURITY, BUT HAD SAID NOTHING ABOUT EGYPTIAN SECURITY. MOREOVER, AS FAHMY READ THE ARTICLE, KISSINGER HAD IN EFFECT ENDORSED THE ISRAELI CONTENTION THAT ADDITIONAL TERRITORY IS NEEDED FOR SECURITY PURPOSES AND HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE PURPOSE OF NEW NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE TO LEGITIMIZE THIS SITUATION. FAHMY CALLED THE KISSINGER COMMENTS A "CRUEL, BRUTAL INVITATION FOR ISRAEL TO EXPAND ON THE BASIS OF AN IMMORAL PRINCIPLE."

7. I SPENT AT LEAST TWENTY MINUTES TELLING FAHMY THAT THIS WAS NOT MY READING OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ANSWERS, BUT HE INSISTED HIS INTERPRETATION WAS CORRECT. IF THE KISSINGER VIEW, AS EXPRESSED IN THAT INTERVIEW, REFLECTS CURRENT USG POLICY, HE STATED, IT IS "MADE IN ISRAEL" AND IS UNACCEPTABLE. SO FAR AS EGYPT IS CONCERNED, THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY LINE IS THE EGYPTIAN BORDER
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AND MUST REMAIN SO. FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON HAD AGREED. THERE CAN BE NO ACCEPTANCE OF ANY PROPOSAL THAT ISRAEL REQUIRES TERRITORY IN SINAI FOR ITS SECURITY. GUARANTEES, DEMILITARIZATION, ETC., ARE ALL IN THE CARDS, BUT NEITHER SADAT NOR ANY OTHER EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT CAN AGREE TO CEDE TERRITORY TO ISRAEL.

8. I TOLD FAHMY THAT I UNDERSTOOD HIS VIEW. AS HE KNEW, ONE OF THE PURPOSES OF SECRETARY VANCE'S UPCOMING VISIT IS TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE PARTIES IN ORDER TO BE ABLE MAKE HIS OWN JUDGEMENT ON HOW WE CAN BEST PROCEED. PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE HAVE BOTH STATED THAT THE USG ATTACHES HIGHEST PRIORITY TO RESUMING THE ME PEACE PROCESS, I COULD ONLY URGE OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS TO TAKE THEM AT THEIR WORD. BUT OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT ISRAEL HAS A POINT OF VIEW, WHICH USG MUST WEIGH IF IT IS TO HELP IN ACHIEVING A JUST AND LASTING PEACE. FAHMY MIGHT REJECT THE ISRAELI VIEWPOINT,

BUT USG, AS FRIEND OF BOTH PARTIES, COULD NOT DO SO
IF IT HOPES TO MAKE PROGRESS.

9. BY THIS TIME, FAHMY HAD CALMED DOWN A BIT. HE COMMENTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT USG IS UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT. USG IS ALLEGEDLY "TIED" TO ISRAEL THROUGH SECRET ANNEXES TO SINAI II AGREEMENT. HE HOPED THIS IS NOT TRUE, SINCE SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD TOLD HIM THAT THE USG COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL INVOLVED ONLY AN OBLIGATION TO CONSULT. WHAT GOE WANTS, FAHMY CONTINUED, IS AN AMERICAN POSITION WHICH WILL GIVE GOE AN IDEA OF WHERE WE INTEND TO GO. IS IT TOWARD EGYPT'S "DOOM" TOWARD A "BETTER FUTURE." GOE HEARS FROM SOME OF USG'S CLOSEST FRIENDS (UNIDENTIFIED) THAT IT SHOULD NOT PUT ALL ITS EGGS INTO THE US BASKET ONLY IF GOE HAS "CLEAR CONCEPT" OF WHERE USG BELIEVES ME PEACE PROCESS SHOULD END CAN IT DECIDE ITS OWN BEST COURSE OF ACTION.

10. GOE, FAHMY WENT ON, CANNOT AGREE TO ANY PROCEDURE THAT "FREEZES" THE ME PEACE SETTLEMENT IN 1977. A FINAL SOLUTION MAY NOT
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BE POSSIBLE IN 1977, BUT SOME SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN A "SERIOUS AND BUSINESS-LIKE" WAY. PEACE CAN BE ACHIEVED IN 1978. FAHMY CHARGED THAT THE ISRAELI LEADERSHIP IS MAKING REPEATED STATEMENTS THAT IT IS IN NO HURRY TO PROCEED ON THE EGYPTIAN FRONT, SINCE SINAI II OBLIGATES EGYPT NOT TO RESORT TO FORCE UNTIL 1978. ALL OF THIS, IN FAHMY'S VIEW, SHOWED THAT ISRAEL INTENDS DELAY PROGRESS UNTIL WE ARE CLOSER TO 1978. ANY SUCH ISRAELI TACTIC, FAHMY ASSERTED, IS UNACCEPTABLE TO EGYPT. WE SHOULD KNOW THAT "SINAI II IS AS FRAGILE AS THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENTS NEGOTIATED IN RHODES." WE SHOULD NOT REGARD HIS WORDS AS A THREAT, BUT SIMPLY AS A WARNING THAT THE ME SITUATION COULD WELL EXPLODE AT ANY TIME BECAUSE OF LEBANON, SOMETHING HAPPENING IN EGYPT, ETC, IF THE ME PEACE PROCESS IS NOT SERIOUSLY AND RAPIDLY TACKLED. THE PRESENT UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY SHOULD BE SEIZED TO BEGIN SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS FOR PEACE.

11. GOE, AS SADAT AND HE HAD REPEATEDLY STATED, IS "READY TO ACCEPT ISRAEL LEGALLY IN THE AREA." THIS IS SOMETHING NEW AND DIFFERENT FROM PAST EGYPTIAN AND ARAB POSITIONS AND SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED BY USG AS SUCH IN ASSESSING THE NEED FOR AN URGENT RESUMPTION OF THE PEACE PROCESS. SADAT'S STATEMENT OF A WILLINGNESS TO CONCLUDE A PEACE AGREEMENT, WHICH TERMINATES STATE OF BELLIGERENCY, SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY ISRAELIS AND POCKETED. IT IS A DECLARATION OF INTENT, WHICH MANY ARABS STILL OPPOSE. MOREOVER, IT IS FEASIBLE ONLY IF AN ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IS ACHIEVED, WHICH INCLUDES ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AND THE CREATION OF THE PALESTINIAN ENTITY.

12. FAHMY CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE LOOKED FORWARD TO DISCUSSING

THESE MATTERS WITH THE SECRETARY IN THE COMING WEEK.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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